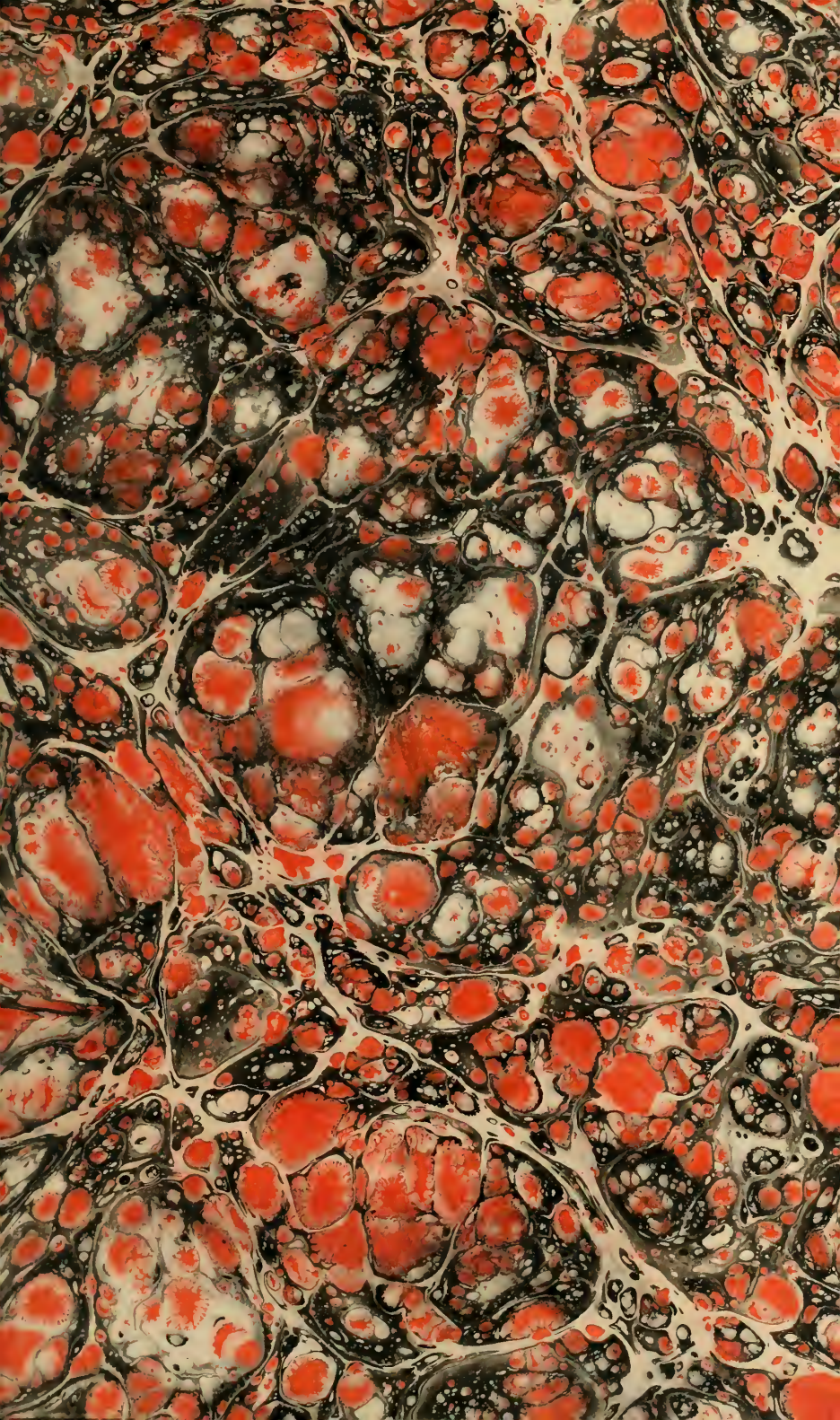

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A

LETTER

TO A

FRIEND,

ON THE

LATE REVOLUTION

IN

FRANCE.

1791.

This confidential Letter was written at the desire of a Friend, whose avocations and want of knowledge of the French tongue deprived him of those sources, from which due information was to be procured. Several persons, more from partiality for the writer, than merit in the work, having requested copies of it, has been the cause of its appearing in print. Neither vanity or lucre has been the least object. To avoid both, he has neither subscribed his name to it, nor offers it to sale.

ERRATA.

Page 8. Note, for 11th century read 14th century. p. 9. fluſhed r. fleſhed. p. 27. unbottoned r. unbuttoned. p. 46. Ramboillet r. Rambouillet. p. 52. grenadier r. grenadiers. p. 55. Note, accident r. incident. p. 67. r. old maids. p. 68. Higgin's r. Higgon's. St. Maurs r. St. Maur. p. 72. Note, dele then.

Theſe, and any other miſtakes which have been committed by the errors of the preſs, the reader is deſired to correct with his pen.

A LETTER

TO A

FRIEND, &c.

DEAR SIR,

YOU have been pleaſed to aſk my opinion concerning the aſtoniſhingchange of meaſures, which has lately taken place in a neighbouring kingdom; I readily aſſure you that an alteration in the ſyſtem of government, in other words, a revolution in France appears to me to have been undoubtedly neceſſary. The deranged ſtate of the finances, verging rapidly towards a national bankruptcy, and the oppreſſions of the people called loudly for it. It was the wiſh of every Frenchman, if we except poſſibly the courtiers who, as in moſt countries, are generally enriched at the expence of the public. Wherefore I perfectly agree with Mr.

Paine, that the ideas of liberty have taken ſuch deep root in the breaſts of the people, that it is ridiculous to ſuppoſe that a counter-revolution can happen: I mean that they will ever ſuffer themſelves again to be reduced to the ſlaviſh ſtate of their former government. We differ then only as to the mode and progreſs of this revolution. The advantages, which may poſſibly accrue from it hereafter, time alone can ſhow.

No man in France more ardently wiſhed to redreſs all grievances, and particularly the derangement of the finances, than the king himſelf. Mr. Paine allows him to be a good man, and on that account beloved by the nation. His Majeſty lamented the ambition of Lewis XIV. and the voluptuouſneſs of his grandfather, to which, with great probability, I may add the fatal alliance which he formed with America: for all theſe contributed to the ruin of the nation.

For this purpoſe he frequently conferred with his miniſters. Perceiving however that no redreſs could be obtained from their counſels, he recalled the parliaments, which his grand-father had diſſolved. He conſulted them. He requeſted their advice. But they, more ſtudious to eſtabliſh their own conſequence, than

than to attend to the public weal, offered no hints, no ſchemes towards the completion of an object of ſuch magnitude and importance. Wherefore his Majeſty, thus baffled in his good intentions, was reſolved to aſſemble the nobility and dignified clergy by their repreſentatives in the ſame manner as Henry IV. one of his predeceſſors, had heretofore done. Theſe were ſtiled the *Notables*.

The Parliament, ſenſible that ſuch a ſtep would totally annihilate their own importance, oppoſed the meaſure as much as poſſible, and gave the King to underſtand that the votes of ſuch an aſſembly, particularly upon the ſubject of taxation, would be incompetent without the concurrence of the third eſtate, ſuppoſing that he would never adopt a meaſure, which would in the end infallibly circumſcribe his own power. They were however miſtaken. His Majeſty was determined to reſcue the people from national diſgrace, from oppreſſion and from miſery. He had pledged his word, and was reſolved to keep it.

The idea of a national bankruptcy terrified no ſet of men ſo much as thoſe who had lent their money upon the ſecurity of the public funds. As long as they had received their intereſt with punctuality, they exhibited no ſymp-

toms of complaint againſt arbitrary power, or the deſpotiſm of the ſtate. But when government became ſlack in the payment of their dividends; when the embarraſſment of the treaſury to make them good was viſible, theſe men became the moſt zealous patriots, the profeſſed advocates for liberty.

At this moment Mr. Necker was miniſter of the finances. When he came into office it was eaſy for him to foreſee that a revolution was at hand. Many things had contributed towards it, and, as Mr. Paine obſerves, the intercourſe with America was not the * leaſt. Mr. Necker therefore was reſolved to have the merit of it. It was his intereſt to gain the ſtock-jobbers, and through them the people. To the former he promiſed ſecurity for their money. To the latter he held forth the cap of liberty and freedom. Even in the aſſembly itſelf he became a neceſſary man, no member being ſuppoſed equally capable of that branch of legiſlation. It was for theſe reaſons that all parties joined in procuring his recal after the King had diſmiſſed him. But when the ſtock-jobbers perceived that from finance, he attended to politics, they turned their backs upon him, as they did afterwards upon the Aſ-

* Modern philoſophy comes in for a great ſhare.

ſembly,

ſembly, when they ceaſed to purſue the grand object they had at heart. What was it to them if the conſtitution was good, or bad, provided their dividends were paid, and their capital ſecured? Thus we ſee for what reaſon Mr. Necker courted the ſtock-jobbers, and the ſtock-jobbers ſupported the miniſter, and ſtirred up the people againſt the lawful authority of the King. He was reſolved, as I ſaid, to have the merit of the revolution, which was then in embryo. But there were other men equally ambitious of that honor, and therefore, when he had ſerved their purpoſes, they turned their backs upon him alſo.

The King had diſmiſſed him, becauſe his calculations towards removing the national grievance were deficient. The ſtock-jobbers and the people however forced his Majeſty to recal him, and at his return he was received as the tutelar angel of France. When the Aſſembly had got all the powers of government into their own hands, they called upon him to produce his budget. Finding it impoſſible to anſwer their expectations, and ſeeing his popularity on the wane, he very prudently withdrew to his eſtate in Switzerland. The day of his return, I ſhould have remarked, was ordained *for ever* to be kept a feſtival.

But

But both the miniſter and the feſtival are now forgotten. *Sic tranſit gloria mundi!*

His Majeſty might have had another motive for diſmiſſing his miniſter. It is not improbable that he received ſome information of his ſiniſter dealings with the ſtock-jobbers and the people. Be that as it may, the diſmiſſion cauſed a general alarm. The preſs began to teem with the moſt incendiary and defamatory pamphlets. Gazettes and news-papers ſprung up like muſhrooms, replete with the moſt inflammable and combuſtible materials. The people in Paris were in a ſtate of the moſt alarming commotion. Meetings were held all over the city, and in particular at the *Palais-royale* (the reſidence of the Duke of Orleans) whereat every black and atrocious deed was hatched, and from thence iſſued. All was now uproar and confuſion. We need only call to mind the calamitous ſcene exhibited in London in the year 1780 to form ſome idea of the preſent moment in Paris, where the minds of the people, if poſſible, are more degraded and debaſed.

It was the dread of theſe mobs, which deterred the Kings of France from making Paris their place of reſidence. To guard againſt this riſing evil, an army was ordered to aſſemble round

round the ſkirts of the city. The motives for this meaſure are variouſly related. I will give you both ſides of the queſtion, and you will then judge for yourſelf. Mr. Paine affirms, with the popular party, that it was aſſembled with the view of caſhiering the members of the National Aſſembly, who were then ſitting at Verſailles. The people were likewiſe made to believe that the army was to reduce the city to aſhes, and to maſſacre all the inhabitants. If I may hazard a conjecture, it ſeems more probable that the King was adviſed to the meaſure for his own ſecurity, as alſo for that of the people and the capital. The army was to intimidate, and not to act offenſively, otherwiſe M. Broglio, one of the moſt experienced generals of the age, would certainly have made a different diſpoſition of it to what he did. If however the view of the court was ever ſo pure, their policy was very defective. It ſerved only to confirm the people in the ideas they had formed of the deſpotiſm of the ſtate, and conſequently augmented their fury and reſentment. By the eaſy communication they had with the army, and their frequent intercourſe with the ſoldiers, they ſoon debauched them from their duty by dint of money, and ſpecious arguments in favor of liberty.

From

From eight to ten thouſand of the rabble now began to parade the ſtreets of Paris, and indiſcriminately to plunder the ſhops, houſes and convents. They ſeized upon the hoſpital for invalid ſoldiers, where they met with no reſiſtance, and furniſhed themſelves with ſome thouſands of muſquets, and ſeveral pieces of cannon. From thence they repaired to the Arſenal, which they plundered alſo, and marched directly for the Baſtile *. On this ſubject likewiſe there is a difference of opinion. The popular party, to palliate their ſavage cruelty towards M. Launey, the governor, gave out that he was puniſhed ſolely for his treachery. This report I ſhall not pretend to confute, as Mr. Paine takes no notice of it, and therefore muſt ſuppoſe it void of credit. The oppoſite party affirm, that his only fault was that of ſubmitting to a parley with the inſurgents, when he ſhould have drawn up the bridges, and retired within the works. Had he done this, they ſay, he might have bid defiance to the mob, without firing a ſingle gun, which he *never* did. Be that as it may, the mob ſeized him, and chopped off his head, without either

* The Baſtile was a fortreſs, like our Tower in London. It was built in the 11th century, for the defence of Paris againſt the Engliſh.

judge

judge or jury, paraded it through the ſtreets, and afterwards ſtuck it up as a trophy before the *Palais-Royale.*

Like hounds juſt fluſhed (if I may uſe the expreſſion) theſe inhuman wretches thirſted after more blood and carnage. Fury and madneſs ſeemed to mark all their ſteps. The Court became terrified, and diſmayed, as well they might. The Aſſembly, taking advantage of their conſternation, artfully ſeized that moment to propoſe to the king that the troops might be withdrawn. To refuſe, would be to confirm the ſuſpicions of the people. The army, or at leaſt what was left of it, was not to be relied upon. The crown, and poſſibly the life of the king, depended upon the anſwer. His majeſty therefore heſitated not a moment. He declared that he would not only give orders for the army to retire, but would, ſuch was his confidence in the people, go to Paris the next day unattended and without guards, and endeavour to ſettle every thing they could wiſh or expect from him.

This generous deportment of the king diſconcerted the views of deſigning men. They were fearful that the confidence which he ſeemed to place in the people might revive their loyalty and affections. To counteract

this, engroſſed all their attention. Their fears however were groundleſs. They had learnt their leſſons. The emiſſaries of the *Palais-Royale* had been both active and able inſtructors. They had taught them to believe that the king put himſelf into their hands through abſolute neceſſity, therefore they were to attribute nothing to the generous confidence of the monarch; for, in fact, it was only a tacit acknowledgment of his own defeat. In a word, he could not do otherwiſe.

The next day however Lewis XVI. faithful to his engagement, ſet off from Verſailles without a guard. When he arrived in Paris, though ſurrounded by an immenſe mob, he heard, not as heretofore, a ſingle huzza, or ſhout of *God ſave the king*, except from a venerable old man who, I ſuppoſe, could not diveſt himſelf of an old cuſtom, which was now going out of faſhion. Had he not been reſcued at the moment, he would have been torn to pieces by the mob for this ſlight tribute of loyalty. This anecdote I had from an eye-witneſs. The king, although he had every reaſon to fear for his life, (for a woman was killed by a muſket-ball not far from his perſon, which ſhot was undoubtedly intended for him) appeared compoſed and undaunted. He bore

up

up againſt this diſgraceful and dangerous day with a courage which reflected the greateſt luſtre on the fortitude of his heart, and the elevation of his mind.

On his arrival at the Town-houſe, he confirmed the nomination of the people in favor of Meſſrs. Bailly and La Fayette. As the former appears to be a very ſingular character, it may not be amiſs to give you a little ſketch of it. He is a member of the Academy of Sciences, and has publiſhed ſome treatiſes on aſtronomy. That a man of his caſt of mind, given to ſuch abſtruſe ſtudies, ſhould quit his peaceable deſk for the tumult and uproar of popular commotion appears very ſingular indeed! This ſingularity of conduct however was ſurpaſſed by his boldneſs and effrontery to the king upon the preſent occaſion. After decorating his majeſty's hat with the national cockade, which undoubtedly was a pointed inſult, as it was the very badge and enſign of rebellion at that moment, he preſented the keys of the city to him, (for you will be pleaſed to obſerve he was then Mayor of Paris) and addreſſed his ſovereign as follows: "Sire, "theſe are the ſame keys which were pre- "ſented to your anceſtor, Henry IV. when "he had ſubdued his people. Now the peo-

" ple preſent them to you, after having con-
" quered their king."

His majeſty having ſuffered every thing that could gall and mortify him, was permitted to return to Verſailles. The queen awaited his arrival with the moſt impatient anxiety. When ſhe ſaw him approach, ſhe ran to meet him, and fainted away at his feet. From this incident we may eaſily form a judgment of the diſtreſſed feelings of this unfortunate Princeſs, and be apt to drop a tear of pity and compaſſion on her ſufferings.

Though the cruel, and indeed ſcandalous behaviour of the Pariſians had rent the king's heart with the moſt pungent grief, yet the demonſtrations of joy which the people of Verſailles teſtified upon his ſafe return, afforded ſome conſolation to the much injured monarch. Here he might have remained in peace, if the iniquitous meaſures of the cabal would have ſuffered it. But it was only in troubled waters they could fiſh with any proſpect of ſucceſs: it was from anarchy and confuſion alone they could expect to bring their vile projects to bear. If his popularity encreaſed, they knew full well that their influence muſt decline. To counteract this, they bent all their force. They were reſolved to terrify

terrify the people into their meaſures, a manœuvre which they have always employed to this day, and, I am ſorry to add, with ſucceſs. For this purpoſe it was buzzed in their ears that plots were hatching, and armies collecting in favour of deſpotiſm and arbitrary power. It was alſo artfully and induſtriouſly inſinuated that no confidence could be placed in the king, who moſt aſſuredly would liſten to the pernicious counſels of his miniſters and courtiers, and adopt every meaſure towards the extinction of liberty.

Theſe reports had their effect. Add to which the high price of grain, for the year 1789 had been very unproductive, revived the former diſcontents of the people, which had ſubſided a little after his majeſty's gracious and paſſive deportment in Paris. The real ſcarcity of that neceſſary article of life however was not ſufficient of itſelf to accompliſh their deſigns; for though it was dear, there was always a ſupply. The cabal therefore was obliged to have recourſe to their old tricks, and as there was no proſpect of a real famine, they reſolved to create ſuch a one in appearance as would anſwer their purpoſes. Of this I ſhall ſpeak more at large hereafter, and in the mean time only obſerve that theſe reports to diſcredit

dit the king's intentions ſoon rouzed the people to action. They began to relent that they had ſuffered him to depart, and were reſolved to bring him back again to the capital. The Marquis de St. Heuregues, a ſeditious firebrand, attempted it at the head of 15 or 16 hundred of the rabble, who, like himſelf, were ready for any bloody deed and atrocious act. But M de Fayette oppoſed him with a body of the militia, reſerving that honor to himſelf on a future day.

The artificial ſcarcity of bread corn gave a very favourable opportunity to thoſe who wiſhed to rid themſelves of their opponents. Every man they ſought to deſtroy was marked as a *monopolizer*, the ſure badge of proſcription at that moment, as the epithet *ariſtocrate* has ſince been. The firſt who was accuſed of monopoly was a M. de Fleſſelles. An anonymous, and more probably a forged letter was all the proof produced againſt him. This was ſufficient for the rabble. They dragged him in conſequence to the Town-houſe, and demanded immediate juſtice. The magiſtrates, who ſince the revolution had ſeized upon the adminiſtration of the police, ſeeming dilatory in pronouncing judgment upon him, the mob ruſhed in, ſeized their victim, and tore him to

pieces

pieces in a moment, carrying his mangled carcaſs in bloody triumph through the ſtreets.

Meſſrs. Foulon and Berthier were the next objects of their miſguided fury. The former had been Comptroller of the Finances, the other Mayor of Paris. The firſt was accuſed of having uſed ſome harſh and imprudent expreſſions reflecting on the people. Poſſibly moved to indignation in ſeeing their exceſſes on the ſuppoſed and artificial ſcarcity of bread, he ſaid that if they were obliged to eat ſtraw, they would deſerve it. But the real cauſe of their diſpleaſure, or rather of the diſpleaſure of thoſe who had the direction of their motions, was his intended appointment to ſucceed M. Necker as miniſter, whom, like the ark of the covenant, none dared to approach with impunity. In their refined cruelty towards this unfortunate Gentleman, they affected to make him undergo the ſame ſufferings as were inflicted on Jeſus Chriſt. They crowned him with thorns, and when fainting and ſinking under their barbarous and cruel hands, they brought him vinegar to drink. Then they ſtruck off his head, which they fixed upon a pole, and carried it in proceſſion through the ſtreets, with a wiſp of ſtraw ſtuffed into the lifeleſs mouth.

M. Ber-

M. Berthier, his ſon-in-law, had been forcibly dragged by another diviſion of the mob from his country-houſe. The two parties met, and they had the inhumanity and unparalelled barbarity to force him to kiſs the bloody and mangled head of his near relation. Then, after repeated inſults, he underwent the ſame fate. A ſoldier immediately tore out his heart, and preſented it, ſtill beating and convulſive, to Meſſrs. de La Fayette and Bailly. Theſe outrages however on human nature were certainly perpetrated by a lawleſs mob, by a furious and deſperate rabble. In this I agree with Mr. Paine; and it would be as unjuſt to condemn the nation at large for their exceſſes, as to make a man in a raging fever reſponſible for his actions. The cenſure therefore lies at the door of thoſe who gave theſe bloody hints to a blind and miſguided mob: it affects thoſe who did not make uſe of their power and authority to reſtrain thoſe deeds of horror and atrocity. In this light can we acquit the National Aſſembly? Moſt certainly we cannot; eſpecially when we reflect that a majority of the Houſe rejected the propoſals of Meſſrs. Mounier and Lally-Tollendal, with ſome others, for preſerving the peace of the capital, and preventing in future

ſuch

ſuch acts of violence and blood-ſhed. M. Bornave in particular, the diſciple of M. Mirabeau, had the aſſurance to applaud thoſe exceſſes. "After all," ſaid he, "is the blood "that has been ſpilt of ſuch mighty conſe- "quence?" Mr. Paine remarks that the people (ſpeaking of theſe bloody deeds) learn to copy after their betters. He might have remarked likewiſe that they knew how to profit by their inſtructions.

The motion, which was made for the re-eſtabliſhment of order, for the maintenance of the peace and the ſecurity of the capital, being rejected, ſeveral members quitted the Aſſembly. They acted with proper precaution, for every diſſenting voice was liable to proſcription. He was an *Ariſtocrate*, conſequently an enemy to liberty. To keep up the alarm, which as I obſerved before was the main policy of the Demagogues, M. Mirabeau informed the Houſe, with the moſt ſerious and ſorrowful countenance, that he had reaſon to ſuſpect that gun-power and other combuſtibles were laid beneath it to blow them all up at once. Search was immediately made, but no diſcovery of the kind enſued. Nevertheleſs theſe reports had alſo their effect. The provinces being alarmed at theſe tales, began

to arm in their own defence, expecting every moment that attacks would be made againſt their newly-acquired liberty, which they were made to believe would be overthrown by the ariſtocratic party. Upon this, they gave unlimited powers to their repreſentatives, who failed not to turn them to their own advantage. From hence, every violent act, every unjuſt meaſure adopted by the Aſſembly, became an act of the nation. The powers which the conſtituents gave to their repreſentatives at the firſt outſet, were very limited, and moderate. They wiſhed indeed for liberty, but it was rational liberty alone they ſought. They had given the moſt poſitive and peremptory order to their repreſentatives to co-operate with the Monarch in every thing in procuring it. They were deputed to form a conſtitution, and ſet ſuch bounds to the powers of the crown, as would preſerve a due equilibrium in the ſtate. As a model, they looked up to this country, though they certainly aimed to improve upon it. Originals are ſuſceptible of improvement, as times and circumſtances alter. But now all theſe moderate views were laid aſide through terror, ſupported by fiction and deceit.

The Marquis de Favras was another unfortunate object of popular fury. It was reported that he had projected the King's escape to Metz; that he had tampered with several of the National Guards for that effect, and had concerted the assassination of the principal men of the new administration. Though no proofs could be brought home to convict him, though the improbability of the facts stared in every man's face, and although he was not even permitted to speak in his own defence, nor to produce any witness, or witnesses in his favor, he was condemned, and put to death. To crown the injustice of this iniquitous procedure, the same person who pronounced sentence of death upon this unfortunate gentleman, added, "Sir, you must consider your "life, as a sacrifice due to the peace and "tranquility of the public."

The Assembly sat a silent spectator of these acts of injustice. They gave out, seeing that in fact they did nothing for the good of the state, that their beneficent views were obstructed by the continual opposition of the aristocratic party. They paid no attention to the dangerous situation of their King, nor even of the nation, had his Majesty been inclined to oppose force to force, and involve

it in a civil war. Fearleſs and regardleſs of all theſe calamities; heedleſs of all the conſequences which might flow from their inattention, they ſtopped the operations of the law, annihilated the magiſtracy, applauded the deſertion of the army, and overthrew all the political force of the kingdom, before they had taken a ſingle ſtep to reſtrain the exceſſes of the people, or to give them any laws in lieu of thoſe they had aboliſhed. The people therefore turned the tables upon their legiſlators in many inſtances, as you will ſee hereafter.

This charge however affects only ſome particulars, who, by the aid of the rabble, had got a majority in the Aſſembly. I ſpeak of a ſet of men, who pride themſelves in particular opinions, oppoſite to the generally received maxims of the world; of a ſet of men, who have ſomething to gain, but nothing to loſe, and thus look upon the misfortunes of their country as a trivial concern, when ballanced in the ſcale of their own ambitious and intereſted views. When I ſpoke of theſe leading men as ſupported by the mob, I ſhould have ſaid that the doors were always thrown open to them, whenever their interference became neceſſary either to ſupport or oppoſe a motion, as circumſtances

cumſtances ſuited. The reverſe is practiſed in this country. No man is admitted, unleſs he be introduced by a member; and when any important and weighty debate enſues, the gallery is cleared, and the company deſired to retire. I now reſume the thread of my ſtory.

M. Mounier, a worthy member of this Aſſembly (whoſe name I ſhall have frequent occaſion to mention) had moved for the eſtabliſhment of two Houſes of Parliament, ſimilar to theſe erected in this country, and that the King ſhould always have a power to diſſent, whenever he judged it expedient, againſt any meaſure which might be propoſed. This motion threw the cabal into a ferment. They threatned thoſe members, who ſhould dare to ſupport it, with their indignation and reſentment. They thundered out their rage through all the provinces, whoſe minds it was neceſſary to poiſon, and whoſe judgments it was their intereſt to miſlead, leaſt they ſhould be inclined to examine too narrowly into the propriety of their own proceedings. In vain was it urged that in England, the King was veſted with this prerogative. In vain did they alledge that this country had two Houſes of Parliament, and nevertheleſs thought itſelf free.

free. In vain did they contend that when a conſtitution was well guarded, the Prince could never ſucceſsfully encroach upon the liberties of the people. Abbé Seyes, among the foremoſt, replied, "that they did not aſ-"ſemble to copy after others, but to create a "new conſtitution; that it was below the dig-"nity of the French nation to adopt ſuch a "patched affair as that of England; that what "might ſuit one country, might not be fitting "for another; in fine, that it was perſpection "alone they fought in the formation of theirs." Thus ſpoke the patriot. His ſpeech reminds me of Swift's reply to an upſtart genius of the ſame complexion, who took for his motto, *Libertas, et natale volum*, under which the Dean wrote, "fine words! I wonder where he ſtole "them." I muſt obſerve that this Abbé Seyes was one of the moſt violent opponents of the nobility and ſuperior clergy when their degradation was the ſubject of debate. But no ſooner did the Aſſembly move for the abolition of tythes, than he was as clamorous in his oppoſition. *Cicero pro domô ſuâ.* He combated the motion with the moſt vehement elocution. So true it is, that ſelf-intereſt is the great and ſole ſpring of moſt men's actions.

In

In the Aſſembly at this moment there was nothing but party, faction, and clamour. The moſt dangerous party, or faction was that which was devoted to the D— of O——. They had openly aſſerted his claim to the crown in caſe of failure in the preſent reigning family. Why was the claim made at this moment? Nobody conteſted it. Let us however proceed, and by combining circumſtances we may be able to form ſome judgment of the matter. We have already ſeen that the bloody trophies of a ſavage mob were ſuſpended before his palace. It is a known fact that he bribed the populace to commit every furious and outrageous act. The public houſes were open to them, and he paid for all. "What need have "we to work," ſaid one fellow to another, "our good father Philip will ſupport us." It is a well known fact likewiſe, that his great aim was to drive the King from Verſailles, and to get himſelf declared Regent or Protector. A few more crimes might place him on the throne. But he was imcompetent to the buſineſs. He he had neither the head to plan, or the heart to execute ſuch ſublime villiany. Our Cromwell he might have poſſibly taken for his model. But Cromwell's ſoul was of a different caſt. Courage and hypocriſy,

criſy, with ſanctified and rigid morals, paved the way to his elevation. A diſregard of all decency marks the character of the D— of O——. In private life, he is abandoned to the loweſt degree of debauchery. I ſhall however neither put you to the bluſh, or ſoil my paper with the recital of theſe. We will therefore take a view of him in the upper regions of gallantry. Taking a fancy to the wife of M—— de S——, he aſſailed him in a tender part. This gentleman was in diſtreſſed circumſtances. The D—— offered him his purſe, provided he would yield the lady to his embraces. The bargain was ſtruck. The D—— made her governeſs to his children, (for he always kept cloſe to the old proverb *utile dulci,)* and ſhe was received into his houſe, where his Ducheſs likewiſe reſided. Thus regardleſs of common decency due to his wife, to his character, and to the world, he gave to this lady, known by the name of Madame G——, the tuition and management of his children, as I have juſt ſaid.

It is reported that this woman was the firſt who impreſſed him with ideas of his own importance, and inſinuated the advantages he might derive from the confuſion of the times, if he would but attend to his own intereſt, ſummon

ſummon up a little courage, and untie his purſe ſtrings, which in ſpite of his immenſe fortune, he had kept carefully cloſed. Trifling incidents often give birth to the greateſt things, particularly where women are concerned. Many inſtances I could adduce in proof of my aſſertion, but ſhall paſs them over, rather than give ſuſpicion of offence to the ladies. As to Madame G——, (as ſhe is according to the cant female phraſe, a *naughty woman)* I may take the liberty to cenſure her; and the more eſpecially as my narrative requires it.

The Queen of France had condeſcended to make her relation a viſit. Madame G—— was in the room, and the lover made her ſit down in the preſence of his Sovereign. The Queen, as well ſhe might, took offence, and the lady, in conſequence of it, was obliged to depart. She vowed revenge however, and what will not a woman do in her reſentment? "*Furens quid fœmina poſſit?*" Like Lady Macbeth ſhe endeavoured to rouſe and animate his ſoul. "Art thou," ſaid ſhe, "afraid to be "the ſame in thine own act and valour, as "thou art in deſire? Would'ſt thou have "that, which thou eſteemeſt the ornament of "life, and live a coward in thine own eſteem?"

Madame B—— (ſhe was with him in London) he alſo decoyed from her huſband. But as his princely diſpoſition would not ſuffer him to eat ſuch prime fruit, without paying for it, he offered to M. B—— to procure him ſuperior rank in the army to that he already enjoyed. This was meant as a compenſation for the injury and inſult offered to that gentleman. What ſtrange ideas of virtue and honor ſome great men have! But Mr. B— was too old-faſhioned to accept the proferred boon; He replied that "the D— had con-"ferred already ſufficient obligations upon him "by ridding him of a faithleſs, and conſe-"quently of a worthleſs wife."

The D——'s courage however did not keep pace with his gallantry. It is a known fact that being in the preſence-chamber at Verſailles on a certain day, an officer who ſtood near his perſon, ſaid, looking him at the ſame time full in the face, "Ce geux, que fait il icy?" in other words, what does that raſcal do here? You may imagine that ſuch a ſalutation was rather grating to his ears. He therefore withdrew to the oppoſite ſide of the room. The officer followed him, and repeated the ſame offenſive words. Upon this the company within hearing began to grin, and he very prudently

dently retired. It was a matter of debate among his party, if he ſhould take notice of the inſult. Upon inveſtigating the ſubject, it was decided in the negative. They not only knew the extent of his courage, but had a greater object in view for him; and to this they bent all their ſtrength.

" He that———and runs away,
" May live to fight another day."

Though I have impeached both his want of decency and courage, I have as yet paid no tribute to his prudence. This would be acting with a partiality I diſdain. Wherefore I beg leave to tell you that on the day he attended the Aſſembly, when his rights and pretenſions to the crown were debated, either through the heat of the place, or the agitation of his mind, he fainted away. Every aſſiſtance, you may imagine, was immediately procured. His neck-cloth taken off, his ſhirt unbottoned, &c. when to their great ſurprize they found his body compleatly guarded by a welted waiſtcoat, otherwiſe a coat of mail. What he had to fear, he himſelf knew beſt. The precaution however was certainly good, and a full proof of his prudence and ſagacity.

It was only in confuſion and riot that he could hope to bring his ſchemes to bear. The

fureſt method for the purpoſe, as inſinuated to him, was to bring about a real famine, or at leaſt the appearances of it, which would not fail to rouſe the mob, as it always ſerves for a pretext for popular commotions. Though the foregoing harveſt had been unproductive, yet by the prudent attention of the magiſtrates that dreadful calamity had been well guarded againſt, and it was proved, that Paris had never been more plentifully ſupplied. This, I ſay, was proved after the ſtricteſt enquiry had been made. It is ſaid that application was made to this country for a ſupply. It may be ſo, yet it does not prove that they were in utter diſtreſs for that neceſſary commodity. They might want it, as we did, both for the quality and the quantity, for our harveſt was equally bad as theirs; and it is provident to keep up the ſtock, for fear of a ſubſequent bad ſeaſon. But the fact is, *they did not want it*, in any other ſenſe. It was not a want of abſolute neceſſity. I prove it thus. At Lille, for example, there was always a ſufficient ſupply. Bread indeed was a little dearer than uſual; and ſo was our's. If then there was no famine at Lille, there could be none in Paris, and upon that I might reſt my argument. But what will not villainy, aided by ingenuity, do? Above two

thouſand

thouſand ſacks of flower, it was well known, were thrown into the river Seine at one time. Indeed it was given out, when this infernal tranſaction was detected, that the corn was damaged, and unfit for uſe. But, by the moſt creditable report, it was declared to be the reverſe.

Another incident occurred which gave the faction a further opportunity of working upon the paſſions of the people with the ſame ſucceſs. I ſhall relate it in Mr. Paine's words. "The *Gardes du Corps* (in other words the "King's body-guards) which was compoſed, "as ſuch regiments generally are, of perſons "much connected with the court, gave an en-"tertainment at Verſailles (October 1.) to ſome "foreign regiments, and when the entertain-"ment was at the height, on a ſignal given, the "*Gardes du Corps* tore the national cockade "from their hats, trampled it under foot, and "replaced it with a counter-cockade prepared "for the purpoſe." There are a few prominent features in this buſineſs, which may lead us to ſome tolerable knowledge of the truth, obſcured as it ſeems to be by the contradictory aſſertions of each party. All the troops aſſembled at Verſailles did not amount to ten thouſand men. What had Paris, or the faction

tion to fear, who could muſter fifty thouſand? The entertainment given by the *Garde du Corps* was no novelty. Such entertainments were uſually, if not always given, as a compliment, upon the arrival of every regiment. This was given to the regiment of Flanders. The militia-regiments obſerved the ſame cuſtom without ſuſpicion of offence. The officers of the *Gardes du Corps*, as well as the other regular troops, had never worn the national cockade, and therefore could not have torn it from their hats to replace it with a counter-cockade, as Mr. Paine aſſerts. To make any thing of his ſtory, we muſt ſuppoſe that they tore the cockades from the hats of the militia-officers, who were alſo invited to this entertainment. But would they have patiently ſuffered ſuch an indignity? Would M. D'Eſtaing, one of the gueſts, who commanded that corps, have brooked ſuch pointed inſolence? Did he, or did they ever exhibit any complaint of the kind againſt the *Gardes du Corps?* The Aſſembly and the faction have been repeatedly called upon to prove the charge. If true, why did not they produce their evidence? What had they to fear? Informers were numerous, cordially received, and deemed a virtuous and deſerving people, particularly when they

they impeached any of the royal party. They liſtened with avidity to the charge brought againſt the *Gardes du Corps*, which one of the members denounced with all the vehemence of paſſionate declamation. He demanded juſtice for the outrages and indignities thrown upon the *auguſt majeſty of the nation* by the inſult to the patriotic cockade, which they had adopted. A certain M. Pethion, who was preſent, requeſted the honorable member to give the charge in writing, and to ſet his name to it. He heſitated, and ſeemed confounded. Upon which M. Mirabeau, to relieve his friend from his embarraſſment, dexterouſly turned the diſcourſe. The Committee, who had liſtened to this charge, perceiving that the tale would not take ſo well as they had wiſhed, immediately forged another. This was the ſecret ſcheme which the *Gardes du Corps* had formed to eſcort the King to Metz. But in this they were likewiſe unfortunate, for the pretended diſcovery of this plot was only made on the 8th of October, and to prevent the execution of it, they ſeized him at Verſailles, and brought him to Paris on the ſixth. They attempted, as you will preſently ſee, to maſſacre the *Gardes du Corps* on the fifth and ſixth of October, when their ſuppoſed delinquency

quency was only difcovered on the eighth day of that month. Indeed fome of the news-papers, to palliate the blunder that was made by their affociates in iniquity, gave out (for the people will fwallow any thing) that the Committee was endowed with the fpirit of prophecy. They foreſaw what would happen, and therefore by *mere inſtinct* faved the nation from deſtruction.

It appears that the Queen was the greateſt object of their jealoufy. She was fuppofed to be the adviſer of the King in all his meaſures. She was therefore hated, deteſted, feared, ridiculed and lampooned. The infamous motion, which M. Mirabeau made in the Houſe, ſeemed pointedly levelled at her. "I propoſe, ſaid he, that it be enacted that every "individual of this nation, excepting the King, "be deemed a ſubject." M. Mounier, the preſident, was alarmed, as well as many other members, at this violent motion, which came unexpectedly upon them, and he immediately turned the attention of the Houſe to another object. For had ſuch a decree paſſed the Houſe, it would not have been deemed unlawful to cut off the Queen or any of the Royal Family, had they thought it neceſſary for their purpoſes. The people are apt ſcholars in all that

that is cruel or mischievous. Mr. Paine allows that they readily take hints from their betters. In confirmation of this point, I must tell you that four assassins, habited like women, stopped on the fatal fifth of October at a public house to drink. One of them addressed his comrades thus. "By G—— I cannot pre-"vail upon myself to kill him. That is not "just. But as to her, with all my heart." To which another replied in the true black-guard stile. The "devil take the hindmost, when "once we are engaged." Two very creditable witnesses swore to this ruffian discourse, to which however no attention was paid. But to return to the *Gardes du Corps*.

The fact is that the Assembly, or rather the predominant faction in it, was jealous of the attachment which that body of men retained for their King. Their loyalty was a pointed satire and constant reproach to them, as contrasted with their behaviour. Too frequently do men reprobate the actions of those who do right, because they themselves do wrong. However this unfortunate entertainment afforded a pretext for calumny, and calumny soon brought on riot, confusion and bloodshed.

The proscription, and consequently the flight of so many rich and noble families from

the capital, had greatly diminiſhed its trade and commerce. The ſhops were without cuſtomers, and the manufacturers without work. To repair this loſs, it was ſuggeſted that if the King and Royal Family were compelled to make Paris their reſidence, the evil under which the people now laboured, would be done away. To forward this ſcheme, it was induſtriouſly reported that the *Gardes du Corps* had it in contemplation to carry the King off to Metz, as I have ſaid, there to erect his ſtandard, ſummon all his ſubjects upon their allegiance to attend him, and this to trample upon the liberties of the people. This report has been ſo confidently aſſerted, and particularly ſo by two gentlemen of my acquaintance, who kept up a regular correſpondence with Paris, that I have been almoſt induced to believe it, was not my aſſent withdrawn for the following conſiderations.

It was undoubtedly the policy and the drift of the D— of O—— to drive the King from Verſailles, becauſe when once his Majeſty had deſerted his poſt, the faction would in all probability have declared the throne vacant, and nominated him Regent or Protector of the realm. If ſuch was not his view, wherefore was he ſo buſy on the fifth of October, on that very

very day, ſo diſgraceful to the French nation in the eyes of all Europe? His heart, as I have obſerved, was not formed for the dangers of ſuch a day. Yet he expoſed his perſon in the midſt of riot, bloodſhed and confuſion. Beſides, how could the King ſuppoſe that a body of 500 men, which was the complement of the *Gardes du Corps* at that moment, could poſſibly cover his retreat, which was ſure to be obſtructed by the national militia, and all the armed municipalities, through which he would be obliged to paſs? Allowing however that the King had formed the intention of withdrawing himſelf, in ſpite of theſe obſtacles, let me aſk: Was he not warranted ſo to do by the alarming temper of the times, and in particular by the indignities which he had ſo lately received from the Pariſians? But to me it appears moſt probable that he had no ſuch deſign. He plainly ſaw through the thin diſguiſe of the D— of O——, and he was reſolved to avoid the ſnare. To his ambitious projects the King was no ſtranger. He had the fate of our James II. before his eyes. From his falſe policy, he derived knowledge, and therefore thwarted the borrowed ſchemes of a ſecond Prince of Orange.

When the decree intitled the *declaration of rights* was preſented to the King for his ſanction, the Council, which he had ſummoned upon the occaſion, demurred. They halted upon the brink of the precipice, for in fact to aſſent to this decree, was to exclude himſelf from all ſovereignty. They therefore gave for anſwer, that his Majeſty would ſoon make his ſentiments known. This delay only ſerved to increaſe the flame, and to accelerate the horrid views of the different parties. The O—— faction, whoſe induſtry never ſlept, turned this irreſolution of the King to their own advantage. The moſt odious comments were made upon it, and theſe did not fail to have the deſired effect, that of raiſing the mob. Money was thrown among them with a profuſe hand; and they in return huzzaed *Philip for ever.* In this motely groupe of impurity were four or five hundred fiſh-women, who, if poſſible, were more blaſted and depraved than their vile aſſociates. At this moment however M. de la Fayette, the Commandant-General of the militia appeared. The people immediately addreſſed him in a clamorous manner, and ordered him to repair to Verſailles, and compel the King and Royal Family to return to Paris, and in future to make

it

it their reſidence. The General * heſitated. He endeavoured to harangue, and appeaſe them, if poſſible. For only anſwer, they pointed to the fatal lanthern-poſt, on which ſo many had already been ſuſpended. Irreſolute and fearful what to do (for now the mob gave him the law) he repaired to the Town-houſe, where a Committee, compoſed ſcarcely of twenty perſons, was then ſitting. By theſe, equally terrified with himſelf, at the inſurrection, he was commanded to ſet off for Verſailles, "ſuch being the will of the people." Thus ſanctioned by law, he bowed obedience, and ſoon after ſet off on his expedition with more than twenty thouſand men and thirty pieces of cannon.

Let me here obſerve that the democratic party in France have affected to compare M. de la Fayette with the American General. I ſhould ſuppoſe however that Mr. Waſhington would not be over proud of the compariſon. He, it is true, aſſerted the liberty of his country, fought for it, and ſucceeded. But his conduct was never marked with the leaſt duplicity or hypocriſy; never did he ſubmit to be the tool of a lawleſs rabble. What had

* By the moſt diſcerning people, he has been long thought to be an equivocal character.

the

the French General to fear? Was he not at the head of his army? If any miſcreant had attempted his life, would not ten thouſand arms have been lifted up to ward the blow? Was the corps, which he commanded, ſo daſtardly that they would have ſuffered their General to be aſſaſſinated in their ſight? Let the General anſwer theſe queries: Either the militia of Paris, which he commanded, was but a gang of cut-throats, which he could not depend upon, or his conduct was cowardly to a degree. Let him now chuſe which ſide of the argument he pleaſes. His courage indeed, notwithſtanding the brilliant panegyric, which Mr. Paine has ſo liberally beſtowed upon him, has not received the ſame tribute of praiſe from thoſe who knew him in America. He ſent a challenge, it is true, to Lord Carliſle, when he perfectly knew that it would not be accepted, becauſe his Lordſhip (as he aſſerted) had ſpoken diſreſpectfully of the King of France. What a fund of loyalty at that moment! I ſuppoſe he then thought as the late King of Pruſſia, who had uſed to ſay that the moſt pleaſing dream a Prince could poſſibly have would be to ſuppoſe himſelf King of France. Was that monarch now alive, would he not exclaim *Quantum mutatus ab illo?*

The

The mob, after having plundered the Town-Houſe, and procured five pieces of cannon, obliged every perſon they met with on the road to proceed with them to Verſailles. This dreadful and motely phalanx, compoſed of men, women, and men in the diſguiſe of women, all drained from the ſcum and ſinks of Paris, arrived at the place of action about four o'clock in the afternoon. The King was then at Meudon, one of his country-houſes, at a ſmall diſtance from Verſailles; for at that alarming period of anarchy and confuſion he did not think it adviſable to go far from his uſual reſidence, having frequently had ocular demonſtration of the uſe which his *good* ſubjects made of the *rights of men.* On the morning he had ſent his anſwer to the *Declaration of Rights,* which I mentioned juſt before: but as it was not explicit, and conſequently not conformable to their expectations, it threw the demagogues into a fury. The moſt indecent and paſſionate reſolutions were propoſed; and, I believe, it was then M. Mirabeau made the motion I have already mentioned, which ſeemed levelled at the Queen, if not at the royal family in general.

What muſt have been the feelings of the king on his return, apprized, as he muſt have been,

been, of the violence of the Aſſembly, and the appearance of ſuch a tremendous mob, you poſſibly may better conceive than I am able to deſcribe. The fiſh-women, in the firſt inſtance, repaired to the houſe where the members were ſitting. They were for forcing their way thro' the centinels who guarded the doors, and breaking them open. The Aſſembly therefore deemed it more prudent to ſave them that trouble, and ordered the doors to be thrown open. The room, you may imagine, was ſoon filled by the multitude, who without any ceremony placed themſelves promiſcuouſly, or, as we ſay, cheek by jole with the members. A chief among this black-guard murderous crew began to harangue them. He ſaid that "the good citizens of Paris " came to demand bread, and the immediate " puniſhment of the *Gardes du Corps* for the " inſult offered to the National Cockade." The Preſident endeavoured to ſoothe and pacify them with mild and ſoft language, but his voice was quickly drowned by the grinding of the carriage-wheels on which the cannon were placed, and which they were going to plant round the houſe, as alſo by the inceſſant roaring and ſhouting of the mob without doors. Thus we ſee that the Aſſembly which had

had made hitherto ſo free with the royal authority, was in its turn treated with as little reſpect, and obliged to yield to a vile rabble, headed by a parcel of fiſh-women. Though many of the members, as not being in the ſecret, might tremble at this awful appearance of things, yet there were others who beheld the alarming confuſion with a ſteady and ſerene countenance. Among theſe were M. Mirabeau, whoſe lack of courage could only be eclipſed by the D— of O—, who alſo (as I have remarked) was in the midſt of the mob. Mirabeau alone ſtepped forward, and boldly interrogated the rabble, how they dared to treat the Aſſembly of the Nation with ſuch indignity and inſolence? Inſtead of reſenting this lofty language, as they moſt aſſuredly would have done, had any of the royal party dared to harangue them in the ſame manner, they exhibited no ſymptom of diſpleaſure. Indeed they could not command their riſible muſcles with the ſame facility they did their tongues, for they were ſeen to grin *horribly* at the farce.

Give me leave to ſay a few words of this M. Mirabeau. By birth he was a Nobleman, and as ſuch offered his ſervices to that order as one of their repreſentatives in the Aſſembly. His character being objected to, his

ſervices were of courſe rejected. He therefore purchaſed a hoſier's ſhop, and wrote over the door, *Mirabeau, Dealer in Stockings, Ribbons, &c.* Thus ſelf-degraded, he ſunk into the Commons, and procured a ſeat to repreſent that body. He was a man of great talents, ſuperior eloquence, and monſtrous vices. In fine, he was formed by nature, as Shakeſpear ſays, for *treaſons, ſtratagems and ſpoils.* His patriotiſm was a farce: for after all his declamation, all his attempts to overthrow the royal authority, he courted its influence; and had it not been for a decree of the Aſſembly, which declared every member of the legiſlative body incapable for ever of holding any place, or penſion under government, he would have ſold himſelf to the court-party, not doubting but they would purchaſe his intereſt at any price. This decree of the Aſſembly made him, if poſſible, a greater enemy than ever to the King. Intereſt alone (for he was a ruined man) being the main ſpring which gave force and elaſticity to all his actions. He is now dead, and peace be to his manes.

Whilſt he was haranguing the mob, the *Gardes du Corps* were attacked. They, as well as the regiment of Flanders, were under arms, but

but had received poſitive orders not to fire. This proves to demonſtration that there were traitors even in the King's Council; for had they been permitted to retaliate, ſuch diſciplined troops would have been an over-match for the raw militia, and confuſed rabble. If they did not mean that they ſhould act, why were they ordered to form? why were they ſent upon duty? The King indeed was informed, that if they were ſuffered to repel force by force, himſelf, and probably all his family would periſh in the conflict. Wherefore theſe barbarous orders were iſſued, and to which the *Gardes du Corps* rigidly conformed, and ſuffered themſelves to be inſulted, wounded, and even many of them killed, rather than diſobey the order. The regiment of Flanders was not ſo paſſive. They did not chuſe to become victims to ſuch rigid military diſcipline. They called aloud for orders to fire. Theſe being refuſed, they tore their cockades from their hats, replaced them with thoſe of the nation, and joined the popular party.

The Preſident of the Aſſembly, having received his orders from the mob, waited upon the King to lay their grievances before him. His Majeſty, as little ſuſpecting as the Preſident, that upwards of thirty waggons laden

with bread, meat, and ſpirituous liquors, had attended the proceſſion from Paris, or that the famine they complained of was the production of craft and artifice, and not owing to any real deficiency; I ſay, his Majeſty little ſuſpecting all this, moſt pathetically lamented the miſeries of the people. He aſſured them, through the Preſident, that he would repeat his orders to have the capital well ſupplied with grain, and that he himſelf would ſee that his orders were punctually and immediately executed. The Preſident was alſo obliged at this moment to preſent to his Majeſty again the *Declaration of Rights*, requeſting his aſſent without any modification or reſtriction whatever. The King ſigned it, and thus gave up every thing; for what power can a man be ſaid to have, who is only to execute the will of another? The Preſident has been much cenſured for his conduct upon this occaſion. He protracted however the evil deed as long as he poſſibly could, for he did not preſent it to the King till after ten o'clock at night. Moreover, the mob now gave the law, and what could the Preſident do? He ſuppoſed his compliance would appeaſe them. The King, as I have already ſaid, aſſented to the Bill. This was not a time to demur,

much

much leſs to refuſe. The Council indeed ſought to protract the buſineſs a little, that the Queen and Dauphin might withdraw, and ſecure themſelves from the dangers which ſurrounded them on all ſides. Her Majeſty, when ſhe was apprized of their intention, and her immediate departure urged as an abſolute neceſſity, nobly and courageouſly declared that ſhe would ſooner part with her life, than leave the King in the hour of diſtreſs, and in the dreadful and alarming ſituation of the preſent moment. "As for death," ſaid ſhe, "I "fear it not—I have learnt from the Empreſs, "my mother, to value life as nothing, when "duty interferes." No intreaties therefore could prevail upon this Princeſs to depart, although ſhe knew that ſhe was the main object marked for deſtruction. In this you will find ſhe was not deceived, although preſerved from ruffian hands by the ſpecial interpoſition of Providence.

The Gardes du Corps, after having been ſo mal-treated, were at laſt ordered to retire from their poſt. They did ſo; but were fired at by the militia of Verſailles, who killed ſome of their horſes, and wounded ſeveral of their men. They proceeded however in tolerably good order, without attempting the leaſt reprisal.

priſal. They were then ſtationed in one of the courts of the palace. All was now uproar and confuſion in the extreme. The mob had moved the cannon from the houſe of the Aſſembly, and placed it oppoſite the court where the *Gardes du Corps* were poſted. The King, to ſave them from deſtruction, and if poſſible to appeaſe the people, ordered them to retire to Ramboillet, about 30 miles from Verſailles, except thoſe who had been wounded, and a few who did duty in various parts of the palace. Alarmed, as well he might be, at the preſent poſture of affairs, he deſired the attendance of the Aſſembly to aid him with their counſels. Before the Preſident appeared, M. de la Fayette arrived at the head of his army. On this ſudden turn of affairs, the King, addreſſing himſelf to the former, ſaid, "Sir, I wiſhed at this alarming moment to be "ſurrounded by the Repreſentatives of the "Nation, and to requeſt their advice. As "things are however, I have nothing more to "ſay than that I never had the leaſt intention "to go to Metz*." This ſpeech carries with it a great air of myſtery. His Majeſty ſeems to have been over-awed by M. de la Fayette.

* In other words, of deſerting his poſt.

However,

However, the Parifian General gave him fuch aſſurances of his perſonal ſafety, that poſſibly he might think it uſeleſs to adviſe with the Aſſembly. Be it as it may, the King was certainly in a lamentable ſituation. Obliged, as he was, to depend for the ſecurity of himſelf and family upon a man who had erected the ſtandard of rebellion againſt him; on a man, who was at that moment at the head of a rebel army, and who was, in a manner, the maſter of himſelf and his family; on this man, I ſay, he was obliged to depend for perſonal ſafety, at the ſame time that he was compelled to diſcard the only faithful ſervants (the *Gardes du Corps*) who had remained inviolably attached to him. I ſaid above that the conduct of M. de la Fayette appears very myſterious. You will poſſibly think ſo likewiſe, and that his profeſſions of ſervice towards the King and royal family were, if not abſolutely inſincere, very equivocal, when I come to relate the ſequel of this horid tale.

The Preſident would not ſuffer the Aſſembly to adjourn, though preſſed to it by ſeveral of the members, and particularly by M. Mirabeau, who doubtleſs (at ſuch a critical moment) had buſineſs elſewhere. He very wiſely conceived that if he could keep them together,

gether, it might be the means of reſtraining the exceſſes of the people, who poſſibly might retain ſome little reſpect for the Repreſentatives of the Nation. But he was miſtaken; for the mob roared and thundered in their ears, "Have done with your long ſpeeches— "Give us bread." Upon this the Preſident propoſed to ſend to all the bakers for bread, little ſuſpecting that a peculiar providence had already provided for them. In a moment the doors of the Aſſembly-room were thrown open, the proviſions which had been conveyed in the thirty waggons unloaded, and they began to carouze. Thus was the temple of liberty profaned, and became the ſeat of gluttony and drunkenneſs.

About three o'clock in the morning, M. de la Fayette quitted the palace, having aſſured the King that he would anſwer for the perfect tranquility of every thing. His next ſtep was to propoſe to the Preſident to adjourn the Aſſembly, aſſuring him that he had taken every neceſſary precaution to keep order. He ſaid that it was high time for all parties to take a little repoſe after ſuch a day of trouble and confuſion; that he himſelf was ſo well perſuaded that every thing would remain quiet and peaceable, that he was reſolved.

ved to go to bed. Upon theſe poſitive aſſurances, M. Mounier, the Preſident, adjourned the Aſſembly, and appointed the members to meet at eleven o'clock.

Theſe proceedings of the General have undoubtedly a very extraordinary appearance. They prove either his ignorance or his treachery. His ignorance, if he could ſuppoſe that ſuch an immenſe rabble, in a great meaſure in a ſtate of intoxication, would be guilty of no exceſs, after the many dreadful inſtances they had already given of it. If he had foreſeen what would happen, (and I believe it will be no raſh judgment from the premiſes to conclude that he did) he acted a moſt treacherous, infamous, and unworthy part.

Whilſt he and the members were conſigned to the arms of ſleep, or at leaſt when the former was ſuppoſed to be ſo, a detachment of five hundred of the militia preſented themſelves before the guard-room of the *Gardes du Corps*, in which place there remained only a few of thoſe who had been wounded and diſabled in the attack which had been made upon them a few hours before; and for the purpoſes of duty, as I remarked above, were alſo left the neceſſary complement. The officer who commanded at the guard-room, ſup-

poſing that this detachment came with the intention of attacking them again, immediately put himſelf and his men in a poſture of defence, being reſolved to ſell their lives as dear as poſſible. The militia perceiving the determined reſolution of theſe brave men, requeſted a parley. One of them, who ſpoke in the name of the body, declared that they came with no hoſtile intentions: all they required were the rights of hoſpitality, and ſhelter from the heavy rain, which was then falling. Upon this aſſurance they were admitted into the guard-room, and treated with the utmoſt attention and civility. Scarcely however had the day began to dawn, than they ſeized upon their generous and credulous hoſts, and diſarmed them. They were then conducted to the parade, where an executioner ſtood ready for the purpoſe of ſacrificing ſuch objects as were delivered over to him. He was dreſſed in a moſt extraordinary manner, and exhibited a very groteſque figure. He had a cap upon his head of an enormous ſize, with a long beard which hung below his breaſt; and a tremendous naked axe, which he held in his hand. After having diſpatched ſome of theſe unfortunate victims, and whilſt they were debating in what manner they ſhould

ſhould diſpoſe of the reſt, another detachment of theſe abandoned wretches broke into the courts of the palace, maſſacred the foremaſt ſentinels, and laying hold of one of them, dragged him under the windows of the King's apartment, and ſtruck off his head. From thence they broke into the apartments of the Queen, after having killed or left for dead the ſentinels who did duty there. Their repeated cries of *Madam, Madam, ſave yourſelf*, awoke that unfortunate Princeſs. She had only ſufficient time to jump out of bed, and run in that condition into the King's apartment by a back-ſtaircaſe, another door which led to the long-gallery, which ſhe had tried, being bolted. Such were the precautions of the faction! And indeed it has been whiſpered abroad, with an air of great probability, that there were ſome men of better note engaged in this horrid traſaction than might have been expected. The Queen had no ſooner eſcaped from this bed of danger, than the aſſaſſins broke into the room, and pierced through the bedding with their bayonets in hopes of perpetrating their horrid intentions on that unfortunate Princeſs: but they were deceived, Providence having procured the means to effect her eſcape. Furious at their diſappoint-

ment, they repaired to the King's apartment: what they propoſed to do there, no one can tell; for at that moment M. de la Fayette arrived with a company of the militia-grenadiers.

It may rather ſurpriſe you, as it muſt moſt people, that the Pariſian General, whom it was ſuppoſed was ſafe in bed, if not aſleep, ſhould appear at this very critical moment. Aſhamed poſſibly of his ſcandalous conduct for the laſt twenty-four hours, and terrified at the dreadful conſequences of his own pretended ſecurity, he judged it prudent to interpoſe. In conſequence of this, he harangued the people with vehemence and energy. His ſpeech made ſome impreſſion, and in a few revived the latent ſparks of honor and compaſſion. The King crying aloud for mercy towards the miſerable remnant of the *Gardes du Corps*, whom theſe miſcreants were about to diſpatch, ſeveral of the militia grenadiers haſtened to the parade, and reſcued thoſe unfortunate victims from their hands. Among theſe were two officers of rank, whoſe heads, grown grey with age and long ſervice, they were going to ſever from their bodies. Juſt before the fatal ſtroke was to be given, they addreſſed the people in the following manner:

"You

"You may ſhorten our days, but at leaſt we "have this comfortable reflection to ſupport "us, that we ſhall die with our characters un- "ſullied."

The King appeared ſoon after at a balcony of the palace, and with him the Queen and children. No ſooner did the populace perceive the latter, than they cried out, *No children. No children. The King to Paris.* His Majeſty, being now in no condition to refuſe, with a good grace promiſed to comply. He immediately ſent for the Preſident of the Aſſembly, and deſired again that the members might attend him, as he wiſhed to adviſe with them on the preſent melancholy ſtate of affairs. Several of the members immediately agreed to conform to the King's requeſt; but they were over-ruled by M. Mirabeau, who ſaid that it was below the dignity of the legiſlative body of the French nation to wait upon the King: beſides, ſhould they condeſcend to do it, their deliberations within the palace-walls might be ſuſpected without doors. All the remonſtrances of M. Mounier, the Preſident, to prove the fallacy of M. Mirabeau's arguments were of no avail. It was to no purpoſe he aſſerted that the dignity of the Aſſembly conſiſted in doing their duty; as ſuch they were indiſ-

indiſpenſably bound to aſſiſt their King under the preſſure of ſuch difficulties; that it was ridiculous to ſuppoſe that kings, when their palaces were ſwimming in blood, could be able to controul their deliberations. Theſe and many other arguments, which this good man made uſe of, though in themſelves unanſwerable, were nevertheleſs negatived by the majority.

This, I am convinced, will appear to you one of the moſt capital faults which the National Aſſembly has been guilty of. Had they agreed to ſatisfy his Majeſty's requeſt, they would in ſome meaſure have wiped off the ſuſpicion which they lay under, of being accomplices in the exceſſes of the mob, and thoſe of the militia. Poſſibly, had they done this, people by this time might have forgot that they took no ſtep towards the ſuppreſſing theſe outrages; no meaſures for preſerving peace and order. At laſt they became conſcious of theſe capital omiſſions. Their work being compleated, they had leiſure for reflection. They became terrified at the increaſing outrages of the mob. Fear had ſeized all their faculties. In a moment they themſelves might become victims to the evil ſpirit which they had conjured up and ſupported. Even

M. Necker

M. Necker forgot the power, which he once enjoyed over the people. He gave himſelf up to tears without making the leaſt effort to gain the Pariſians, who heretofore looked upon him as their ſaviour, and the tutelar angel of the nation. This * weakneſs, or call it what you pleaſe, in the Miniſter, will be for ever thrown in his teeth, as often as ever his name is recorded in hiſtory. It is impoſſible to ſay that he could have ſucceeded. Had it been otherwiſe, at leaſt he would have had the merit of having attempted it. But, as I ſaid, fear and terror had made ſuch impreſſions on the Aſſembly, except among the few who were privy to the real ſecret, that M. Necker

* Another ſymptom of weakneſs he exhibited by adviſing the King to admit a double repreſentation of the people in the Aſſembly. He ſoon however perceived his miſtake, and wiſhed in ſome meaſure to remedy what was now paſt a cure; for the people, having got all the power in their own hands, were not ſo ready to ſurrender it. In hopes however of applying a remedy, he ſilently ſided with thoſe who voted for the prerogative in the King, to aſſent or diſſent to any bill which paſſed the Houſe. But when he found the motion ſo unpopular, courtier like, he ſuffered himſelf to be carried down the ſtream. This accident (among others) proves that M. Necker never meant to carry things to the ſhameful pitch they are now arrived at.

is not more culpable than the reſt for having yielded to them.

Every thing being now prepared for his Majeſty's departure from Verſailles to Paris, it was decided that the ſaid bloody characters, which hitherto had marked the triumphant proweſs of the people over their king, ſhould be diſplayed in the mournful proceſſion, which was now going to take place. On each ſide of the King's coach were marſhalled the remnant of his *Gardes du Corps*. Without arms, their hair diſhevelled, covered with duſt, ſweat, and wounds; fainting under the fatigues and apprehenſions of the preceding conflict, they were ordered to march on foot. Before the carriage were carried upon long poles two of the heads of their unfortunate comrades, preceded by the executioner, above mentioned, ſmeared all over his face, breaſt, and hands with human gore. The Queen was in a ſeparate carriage. I only mention this to ſay that the mob had ſtopped it ſeveral times; opened the doors, and inſulted her in the groſſeſt manner. An immenſe mob, as you may imagine, attended this woeful proceſſion of degraded majeſty, huzzaing and roaring like the war-hoop of the wild Indians; and that the whole might be as galling and mortifying as poſſible

poſſible to the unfortunate objects of their proud exultation, it moved with a moſt ſolemn pace. The rear was brought up by the cannon, and thus it paraded to Paris. It may be remarked that the order of this diſmal proceſſion was planned by no ordinary head. There was too much regularity in it, if I may uſe that word, to have been the effect of chance, or even to have been projected in haſte. Poſterity undoubtedly, as well as the preſent generation, will be as much ſurpriſed when they reflect that theſe horrid ſcenes were exhibited by a nation, which has always been deemed polite, humane, and inviolably attached to their Sovereigns; by a people who have been always ſo infatuated with their own conſequence and ſuperior merit, as to deem the reſt of the world (like the ancient Romans) barbarous. *Barbare* was too frequently uſed heretofore by moſt Frenchmen as a word of contempt, when they ſpoke of foreigners, I leave you now to judge where the epithet might be moſt properly applied at this moment.

Permit me to repeat what I remarked before. There were ſeveral parties or factions in the Aſſembly. You have obſerved the end which the D—— of O—— propoſed to him-

ſelf by conjuring up this laſt ſtorm. But ſucceſs did not attend the project. It is more than poſſible M. de La Fayette might fear he would prove ſucceſsful, and thus may be explained, the ſudden appearance of the Pariſian general, when the aſſaſſins broke into the palace. He had reſerved to himſelf the honor of making the King a priſoner, and therefore prevented the execution of a ſimilar ſcheme which the Marquis de St. Hereaguer had attempted ſome time before, as I have already noticed.

The D—— of O—— was now in a very critical ſituation, for M. de la Fayette was privy to his projects, and might impeach to make ſome amends for his own evil deeds. Wherefore the King, to ſave his relation from the conſequences of an inquiry into his conduct, obtained a paſs-port of the National Aſſembly; and under pretence of a ſpecial commiſſion to the Court of London, reſcued him from diſgrace. Here he remained, till by his pecuniary ſacrifices and baſe ſubmiſſions he bought his peace of the Aſſembly, and was permitted to return. *

No

* It has been far from my intention to calumniate this great perſonage, if ſuch I may call him. His character

is

No ſooner did the King reach Paris, than the famine ceaſed. This appeared ſo evident, that the people jeſtingly ſaid that they had brought the baker, his wife, and apprentice into the city, meaning the King, Queen, and the Dauphin. This vile ſcheme having had its due effect, the impoſition was no longer neceſſary. The next object of their care was to preſerve that authority which they had uſurped, for now the *veſſel of ſtate was ſailing with more rapidity than ever*, as they aſſerted. The provinces however might rebel, and call them to an account for their conduct towards the King. Other powers might arm in defence of injured and degraded majeſty. They might make it a common cauſe, and thus would the faction loſe the fruits of their labours. However they had the King in their hands, and he would ſerve as a compleat barrier, or rather a hoſtage againſt all attempts both within and without. It has always been the policy of inſurgents, and in particular of the French nation, to ſecure their King for that very ſame purpoſe. The Hugonets attempted it at

is ſo well known, and the tranſactions, which I have noticed, are poſitively aſſerted by numberleſs writers, uncontradicted by any, that the tale can only be novel to thoſe who have been ignorant of the events.

Amboiſe upon Francis II. and at Meaux upon Charles IX. Theſe however did not ſucceed ſo well as the preſent faction have done, who, to make the beſt of their miſerable hoſtage, forced him to declare that he went to reſide in Paris of his *own accord*; that being *free* to go where ever he pleaſed, he had *choſen* that city for the place of his reſidence. Who could reproach them after ſuch a declaration? Did he not declare that he went to Paris of his own *free will?* Did they not, in conjunction with the Monarch, labour for the good of the nation? Did he not aſſent *freely* to their decrees, ſeeing that he himſelf was *free?* It however may be aſked, *en paſſant*, if he was *free to go wherever he pleaſed*, how they came lately to ſtop him, as he was going to St. Cloud for the benefit of a little country air? How it happened that they forced him to return to his reſidence, I had almoſt ſaid to his priſon, in Paris? I now proceed. This ſophiſtry of the faction threw duſt in the eyes of the people. It was all they wanted; for what is a king without them? It precluded all reflection, and left them in the peaceable enjoyment of their uſurpation. Another motive likewiſe contributed towards it. If any attempt was made for his emancipation, he would

would undoubtedly have been the victim of it. It muſt have created in ſome degree a civil war, which the faction would no doubt have imputed to his intrigues; and, like our Charles I. have made him anſwerable for. Among many other reaſons for my aſſertion, I ſhall trouble you only with the following. It was debated at the club of the *Jacobins*, which is known greatly to influence, if not totally to give the law to the Aſſembly, *whether a king is amenable to public* * *juſtice?* Soon after which, a Member of the National Aſſembly, commenting largely upon the unfortunate cataſtrophe of King Charles I. Another member (Mr. Briſſot) among many other violent remarks, replied that "the Engliſh Parliament "ſhewed itſelf guided by the true ſpirit of "patriotiſm when it aboliſhed a tyranical "monarch. He deſerved the moſt rigorous "puniſhment, and brought down upon his "devoted head, the juſt vengeance of earth "and heaven." (inſerted in the Argus Nov. 3. 1790.) As I ſaid, this conſideration muſt hitherto have prevented attempts to reſcue the king and the nation from thraldom. It is impoſſible, upon any other grounds, to account

* If I recollect right, it was carried in the affirmative.

for

for the inactivity of ſo many princes of the blood, of ſo many of the firſt and nobleſt families of France, who have been deprived of their honors, dignities, and patrimony, and forced into a kind of voluntary exile. It is an example without precedent.

Here I might diſmiſs the ſubject, did I not wiſh to make a few remarks concerning their treatment of the clergy, whom by a ſpecies of contradiction, they have excluded from the *rights of men*. The national debt, and the want of credit, added to M. Necker's declaration that he could not make good his engagements for the lequidation of it, were the ſpecious cauſes of their ruin. The Archbiſhop of Aix, in the name of the clergy, offered four hundred, and afterwards ſix hundred millions of livres for the purpoſe. It was of no avail. Why? becauſe there is not a doubt but a great party, if not the greateſt, wiſhed to aboliſh all * religion from the land, and nothing could do it more efficaciouſly than the degradation and annihilation of the clergy.

* Wiſe legiſlatures! Plutarch will tell them "that a "city might ſooner be built without any ground to fix it "upon, than a commonwealth be conſtituted without "religion."

Where

When a motion was made, whether the ancient religion ſhould be the one eſtabliſhed by law, it was only to feel the pulſe of the nation, and try if they could be prevailed upon to diſcard it totally. The mode of religion to the Aſſembly in general was very indifrent. The publications of Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Abbé Raynal, &c. &c. which Mr. Paine ſo much extols and recommends, overturned every idea of it, as well as of regal government. Thoſe who are converſant in their works will not heſitate to pronounce that from theſe ſources they learnt to deſpiſe their religion, their king, the clergy, and whatever was heretofore deemed ſacred honorable and uſeful.

The decree, declaring the property of the church to be that of the nation, having paſſed, thouſands of both ſexes have been, in conſequence of it, ſtripped of a comfortable maintenance, and in a manner ſent a begging, or obliged to live upon a precarious ſubſiſtence. To undermine religion more efficaciouſly, an oath was framed in ſuch equivocal and ambiguous terms as was ſure to be refuſed by every man of ſentiment and integrity. Thus, out of one hundred and thirty-one of the epiſcopal

pal order, only four have taken it. This is a ſtale trick of ſtate policy, which has been practiſed with more ſucceſs than honeſty in other countries beſides France. But to return. If ſo many of the epiſcopal order, as I ſaid, have refuſed this oath, how much greater muſt the number be among the inferior clergy? In fact ſo few have taken it, that they are obliged to accept of whatever they can get, and ordain and admit ſuch as are neither qualified by their education or morals for thoſe functions. But the people will have ſome ſhow of religion, * and to this the demagagoes, in ſpite of the leſſons they have culled from the works of Voltaire and other philoſophers, are obliged to conform. They are certainly very miſerable politicians that can ſuppoſe a ſtate may ſubſiſt without it. It is in direct oppoſition to experience, and never was ſuppoſed by any legiſlator whatever, before the preſent moment.

The impolitic and unjuſt meaſure, which they have adopted, of depriving the church of its patrimony, cannot be more amply aſcer-

* No nation under the ſun exiſts without ſome ſhow of religion. It is as appropriate to their nature as to eat, drink, or ſleep.

tained

tained than by precedent. This they had before their eyes, and might have profited of the miſtakes of others, had equity and the welfare of their country been the objects of their views. Many of the beſt men in this country (Proteſtants) have lamented the diſſolution of religious houſes throughout this iſland. What will become of the poor in France? Let Mr. Collier anſwer. "The abbeys ſuppreſſed in "England and Wales, ſays he, were ſix hun- "dred and forty-five, as Camden reports. "The yearly revenue is computed at "£. 135,522 : 18 : 10. — While the religious "houſes were ſtanding, there were no provi- "ſions for the poor. No aſſeſſment upon the "pariſh for that purpoſe. But now this charge "upon the kingdom (obſerve he wrote in "Queen Anne's reign) amounts at a modeſt "computation to 800,000*l. per annum.*" Now give me leave to remark that if we compute the annual income of £. 135,522 : 18 : 10 with the poor's tax, even of his time, it will appear what the nation has loſt by the diſſolution. Conſideration nevertheleſs is to be had to the different valuation of money in thoſe days and theſe; but this makes no difference in the nature of the burthen, which the preſent poſſeſſors of the abbey-lands would find, if the whole

charge of the poor was to be thrown upon them. It is allowed, the nation is grown more populous, and by this the number of the poor are proportionally increaſed; but are not the riches and trade of the nation increaſed in the ſame degree? Now it is ſomewhat myſterious, how a nation that increaſes in wealth ſhould abound with more beggars, unleſs ſacrilege has *entailed* that curſe upon them.

But what would Mr. Collier ſay, if he was now living, to the poor's tax of the preſent day? What would his aſtoniſhment be, when informed that it is tantamount to, if it does not exceed the yearly revenues of the kingdoms of Sweden and Denmark? And yet, to the diſgrace of the nation, the towns and country are over-run with beggars, and the poor are ſtill increaſing every day.

What compenſation will the National Aſſembly be able to make "for the advantages, "which they have now loſt, received from the "religious hoſes, which were conſiderable upon "ſeveral accounts. To mention ſome of them. "The temporal nobility and gentry had a cre-"ditable way of providing for their younger "children: Thoſe who were diſpoſed to with-"draw from the world, or not likely to make their

" their fortune in it, had a handſome retreat " in the cloiſter. Here they were furniſhed " with conveniences for life and ſtudy, with " opportunities for thought and recollection, " and over and above paſſed their time in a " condition not unbecoming their quality." Give me leave to add that young ladies of ſmall fortunes, and old who were doomed to a life of celibacy have frequently experienced the propriety of Mr. Collier's remarks. They had a comfortable and genteel retreat, which they have now loſt. Another writer, no ways prejudiced in favor of the religion profeſſed in the convents, thinks that " to the want of ſuch " retreats in a great meaſure are to be aſcri- " bed the ſeveral inconveniences we lie under " at this day; eſpecially ſince the frequent " marriages of the meaner and indigent clergy, " who having no temporal eſtates to ſupport " their families after their death, leave their " wives and daughters deſtitute and neceſſi- " tous, who being too proud, or too lazy to " work, often take ill courſes to ſubſiſt; all " which might be prevented, if there were " places to receive and ſupport them in a vir- " tuous and comfortable way of life. From " this defect refults the lewdneſs of theſe aban- " doned times, more than from any vicioufneſs

" in the temper or conſtitution of the Engliſh, " ſince we ſeldom find theſe diſorders in wo- " men of birth, fortune and education; while " others in ill circumſtances generally ſacrifice " themſelves to their vanity and neceſſities; "&c." (Higgin's Short View of the Hiſt. of England, Reign of Henry VIII.

" The abbeys, ſays Mr. Collier, were very " ſerviceable places for the education of " young people, who were taught without any " charge to their parents. And in the nunne- " ries thoſe of the other ſex learnt to work, " &c." He then proceeds to tell his readers, that it is to the abbeys we are obliged for moſt of our hiſtorians " of church and ſtate." Will not this apply equally to the abbeys in France? Where has there been a more learned, and conſequently a more uſeful body, than the congregation of St. Maurs?* " Beſides this rent- " charge (the poor's tax, which Mr. Collier " has been ſpeaking of) the nobility ſuffered " conſiderably." He then enumerates their loſſes upon the diſſolution, and ſays " The

† I might have mentioned the Jeſuits, who have excelled in every branch of literature. They taught youth *gratis*; and inſtilled into their pupils the love of virtue and rational ſubordination. Had their order not been aboliſhed, the revolution, ſuch as it is in France, would never have had an exiſtence.

" founders

" founders had the benefit of *corrodies*, that is, " they had the privilege of quartering a cer- " tain number of poor ſervants upon the ab- " beys. Thus people that were worn out " with age and labour, and in no condition to " ſupport themſelves, were not thrown up to " ſtarving, or pariſh collections, but had a com- " fortable retreat to the abbeys, where they " were maintained without hardſhip, or marks " of indigence, during life.

Let us now ſee what theſe hiſtorians ſay reſpecting the injuſtice of the diſſolution, and the means which were taken to effect it, both of which equally apply to France at the preſent moment. " The rights and liberties of " the Church, ſays Mr. Collier, had been con- " firmed in thirty parliaments. They ſtand " in the front of *Magna Charta*. The endow- " ments of the Church were ſettled upon im- " portant conſiderations. For the honor of " God, the advancement of learning, for the " intereſts of eternity.——It is ſaid that the " monaſteries were of royal * foundation, and " therefore the taking them away, was only a " reſumption of grants from the crown. The

* Therefore " what the ſtate had given, the ſtate might take away." See Lord Robert Fitzgerald's Speech, page —.

" aſſertion

" aſſertion is wide of truth, as many of the " abbeys, &c. were founded by biſhops and " temporal lords, and ſome by gentry of leſſer " quality. Beſides all the eſtates in the king- " dom were grants from the crown, as appears " from the tenures: and it would have been " looked upon as an arbitrary attempt to have " taken them away. For a gift is a tranſla- " tion of right, extinguiſhes the title of the " donor, and veſts the property in another. " But this alienation was made by act of par- " liament; (or, let me add, by a decree of the " National Aſſembly) That is true; and there- " fore it was a legal ouſting. But then it will " be aſked, if a great part of the temporal lords " and other rich laity had been thrown out of " their eſtates by a ſtatute, whether ſuch pro- " ceedings would not have been thought an " inſtance of rigour, and myſterious authority? " Had they been thus impoveriſhed without " treaſon or felony to deſerve it, it may be the " legality of the form, and the pleaſure of the " legiſlators, would hardly reconcile them to " ſuch uſage.—It would be very much a que- " ſtion whether the heirs of the abbey-lands " would be ſo compliant with the crown, and " part ſo eaſily with their money, as the monks " had done.—Such an experiment upon men

" of

" of title and intereſt, of ſteel and ſtomach " might prove dangerous in the operation.— " When the Emperor Charles V. heard of the " fate of the Engliſh abbeys, he is reported to " have ſaid, that now the King had killed the " hen, which laid golden eggs." In fact, what immenſe ſums have not the French clergy at times raiſed for the benefit of the ſtate? And what an enormous ſum did not they offer (ſix hundred millions of livres) at this preſent moment? This reſource, which is now loſt, might have been of uſe at a future day. The abbeys muſt be rich, as they always live ſo much within the income of their revenues*.

To effect a diſſolution of theſe religious eſtabliſhments in France, they were obliged to have recourſe to the ſame vile means, which were practiſed in this country.

Mr. Thomas Hearne, in his preliminary obſervations upon Mr. Browne Willis's view of the mitred abbeys, ſays that Henry VIII.

* The beſt ſtated fact I can produce of the contributions of the French clergy to the ſtate is from the year 1734 to 1755. During this period they gratuitouſly gave to the King eighty-one millions of livres. The taxes they paid were likewiſe enormous. It is true, they were obliged to borrow the money for theſe gratuitous donations, which their economy however enabled them to be paying off yearly.

and

and his courtiers to gain their ends "paſſed "by no arts or contrivances that might poſ- "ſibly be of uſe in obtaining them. The "moſt abominable crimes were to be charged "upon the religious, and the charge was to be "managed with the utmoſt induſtry, boldneſs "and dexterity This was a powerful argu- "ment to draw an odium upon them, and to "make them * diſreſpected, and ridiculed by "the generality of mankind." Has not this been done in France? Conſult the works of Voltaire, &c. Inſomuch that for theſe few years paſt a religious man has not been able to walk the ſtreets without being inſulted. But to proceed with Mr. Hearne. "Yet after "all, the *proofs were ſo inſufficient*, that by what "I have been able to gather, I have not found "one direct charge proved, not even againſt "any ſingle monaſtery."

"But, ſays Mr. Collier, granting that the "lives of the religious were not ſo ſtrict as "they ought to have been, it would have been "no ſufficient reaſon to ſeize their eſtates. If "inſobriety and miſbehaviour were ſufficient "grounds for forfeiture; if ill-living, and not

* For this purpoſe was the play of Charles IX. then written, and acted in Paris. For this purpoſe was *an auto da fé* exhibited in their theatre.

"anſwering

" anſwering the ends of an eſtate would juſti-
" fy the diſpoſſeſſing the owner, property would
" be very precarious, and tenures ſlenderly
" guarded.—Acts of Parliament have without
" queſtion authority to over-rule claims, ex-
" tinguiſh titles, and govern the courts of ju-
" ſtice. But are there not ſome things above
" the reach of the legiſlature? Can a ſtatute
" unconſecrate a church, enact a ſunday no ho-
" liday, or ſacrilege no ſin? Is not almighty
" God capable of property? If we muſt an-
" ſwer in the affirmative; how can an eſtate
" dedicated to his ſervice, and veſted in him,
" be taken away without his conſent? Which
" way can the intention of the donor, and the
" main deſign of the conveyance be over-
" looked, and defeated?

How the ſpoils of the religious houſes will be applied in France time alone can ſhow. But as the ſame cauſes have generally the ſame effects, we may make a ſhrewd gueſs from precedents alſo. Permit me to tranſcribe a few lines from Sir William Dugdale upon the ſubject; " All the fruit the people reaped, after
" all their hopes built upon theſe ſpecious
" pretences, *(viz.* as in France, by relieving
" the people from the oppreſſive taxes) was
" very little. For it is plain that ſubſidies
" from the (remaining) clergy, and fifteenths

" of lay-men's goods were ſoon after exacted:
" and that in King Edw. VIth's time the Com-
" mons were conſtrained to ſupply the King's
" wants by a new invention, *viz.* ſheep, cloaths,
" goods, debts, &c. for three years, which tax
" being ſo heavy, that the year following they
" prayed the King for a mitigation thereof."
Camden ſays " Notwithſtanding the immenſe
" ſpoils of the abbeys, King Henry VIII. was
" reduced to ſuch poverty that (to the utter
" ruin of commerce in this nation) he had
" corrupted the ſterling, or *Eaſterling* coin,
" which King Richard II. had declared to be
" the only lawful money of the kingdom."
And ſo much was it debaſed, that the effigy of the beautiful King Henry appeared on the teſtons with a red copper noſe. And had he lived a little longer, a project was made to coin leather money.

In the former tranſactions of this country, relative to this ſubject, we may in a great meaſure eſtimate the preſent proceedings in France. The ſame cauſes, as I ſaid, will generally produce the ſame effects. " Abbey-lands, ſays " Fuller, in his Church hiſtory, as the duſt " flung up by Moſes, preſently diſperſe all the " kingdom over, and at once become curſes " both on the families and eſtates of the own- " ers—for within twenty years next to the " diſſolution

" diſſolution more of the nobility, and their " children, have been attainted, and died un- " der the ſword of juſtice, than did from the " conqueſt to the diſſolution, being almoſt " 500 years." If a counter-revolution ſhould be attempted in France (a thing not at all impoſſible) ſome future hiſtorian may make the ſame melancholy remark on that country.

The facts, relative to the Revolution in France, I have collected from a variety of French pamphlets written on the ſubject by parties on both ſides of the queſtion. When I found any of them poſitively aſſerted by one ſet of men, and not contradicted by the other, or palliated in ſuch a manner as to be tantamount to a conceſſion, I thought I might venture to ſtate them as facts: I vouch for their authenticity no farther *. If I have arraigned their proceedings with freedom, it was their proceedings only I meant to cenſure, and not their attempts for liberty. I

* If it be aſked, if men can be guilty of ſuch facts as I have related? let them read the works of the modern philoſophers, and give the anſwer. The majority in the Aſſembly are profeſſedly the diſciples of theſe philoſophers. They are now, and indeed have been paying almoſt divine honours to them. According to the old proverb, " Tell me what company you keep, and I will tell " you what you are."

wiſh it ſincerely to all the children of Adam. I know the full value of it, having the happineſs to enjoy a portion of it myſelf. But it is rational liberty I contend for, ſuch as is conſiſtent with the peace and welfare of ſociety. Every man, ſays Mr. Paine, has undoubted natural rights; but he juſtly adds, thoſe rights do not warrant him to encroach upon thoſe of his neighbour. I moſt cordially wiſh that the ſucceeding generation in France may in ſome meaſure atone by their good deeds for the miſtakes of the preſent day; and as fermenting liquors by degrees work off their feculance, ſuch a reformation both in church and ſtate may take place, as will redound to the glory of God, and the happineſs of the people. There were undoubtedly very great acts of cruelty and injuſtice committed in this nation, both at the Reformation, and at the * Revolution in 1688; but theſe are almoſt forgotten by the peace and happineſs we now enjoy.

I am very well convinced therefore that the argument may be retorted upon me, nevertheleſs I ſhall take the liberty to cenſure what appears to be cenſurable. It was the fate of Lord Robert Fitzgerald, which however has not in the leaſt detracted from his merit in

* Witneſs the many innocent perſons who ſuffered for Oat's plot and others; all tending to promote the ſame end, humanely

humanely and benevolently ſtanding forth in defence of the Iriſh and Scotch colleges in France, which lay under the general proſcription. "The ground which Lord Robert Fitz-" gerald took, ſay our newſpapers, for this ex-" emption was, that whatever property thoſe " colleges poſſeſſed in France, it had been all " purchaſed with money carried from Ireland " and Scotland; that the endowments of thoſe " colleges not having been French, but Bri-" tiſh from the beginning, the principle that " what the ſtate had given, the ſtate could " take, could not attach upon them; or if it " did, it was only to ſhow that the ſtate could " not in juſtice take thoſe endowments for " the beſt of all reaſons, becauſe it was not " from the bounty of France that they were " held; on the contrary, a valuable conſide-" ration had been given for them, and the a-" mount of it was paid with Britiſh money."

" One member juſt obſerved upon it, that " the preſent æra was fertile in revolutions, " as aſtoniſhing as they were new. He ſaid " it was not more ſurpriſing to ſee a Nation-" al Aſſembly ſitting amidſt the ruins of deſ-" potiſm, in the capital of France, giving " laws to the kingdom, than to ſee the Mini-" ſter of a Proteſtant King pleading the cauſe " of the catholic ſubjects of that monarch,

" whom

" whom the intolerant ſpirit of penal laws had
" forced to become refugees in a foreign
" land; and who would inſtantly ceaſe to be re-
" fugees, if their own government would ceaſe
" to be intolerant. To refuſe them protection
" at home, and afford it to them in a foreign
" ſtate, was a phenomenon both in politics
" and common ſenſe. The ſtep taken by
" Lord Robert Fitzgerald ſeemed to be the
" conſequence of a ſtruggle between abſurd
" policy on the one hand, and wiſdom on the
" other; and he rejoiced that the latter had
" triumphed; but he remarked, however,
" that its triumph could not be complete till
" England ſhould have learned to treat all its
" inhabitants as ſubjects, and not force any of
" them to ſeek abroad for that protection,
" which penal laws, attaching not upon crimes,
" but upon conſcience, do not ſuffer them to
" find at home."

I begin to fear that I have now tired you with this long letter; too ſhort however it certainly is for the magnitude of the ſubject, which poſſibly may give you as much pain to read, as it has to me to relate. The hiſtory of nations, Voltaire very juſtly obſerves, is but a recapitulation and a memorial of their crimes. A moſt melancholy reflection! To releaſe you therefore from this painful ſub-

ject,

ject, I ſhall only add that if the King attempts an eſcape (which I think very probable, if he can do it), it will prove to demonſtration the ill treatment he has received, and the danger to which his life is expoſed. No other motive, but that of ſelf-preſervation, would tempt him to quit his preſent reſidence, and riſk his crown, even ſuch as it is in its preſent ſtate of debaſement.

As to the oath which he has taken to preſerve the conſtitution as by law eſtabliſhed, it never can be deemed binding, becauſe he was not free * when they forced it upon him. He had

* He was then, as he is ſtill, a priſoner. Had the faction thought the oath binding, why did they deprive him of his liberty?——The following extract from Judge Blacſtone will ſet this matter in a clear light: "An involuntary act," ſays he, "as it has no claim to merit, ſo "neither can it induce any guilt; the concurrence of the "will, when it has its choice either to do or avoid the "fact in queſtion, being the only thing that renders human actions either praiſe-worthy or culpable. Indeed, "to make a compleat crime cognizable by human laws, "there muſt be both a will and an act; to conſtitute a "crime againſt human laws there muſt be firſt a vicious "will, &c. One caſe in which the will does not join "with the act, is where the action is conſtrained by ſome "outward force and violence. Here the will counteracts "the deed, and is ſo far from concurring with, that it "loaths and diſagrees to what the man is obliged to per-"form,

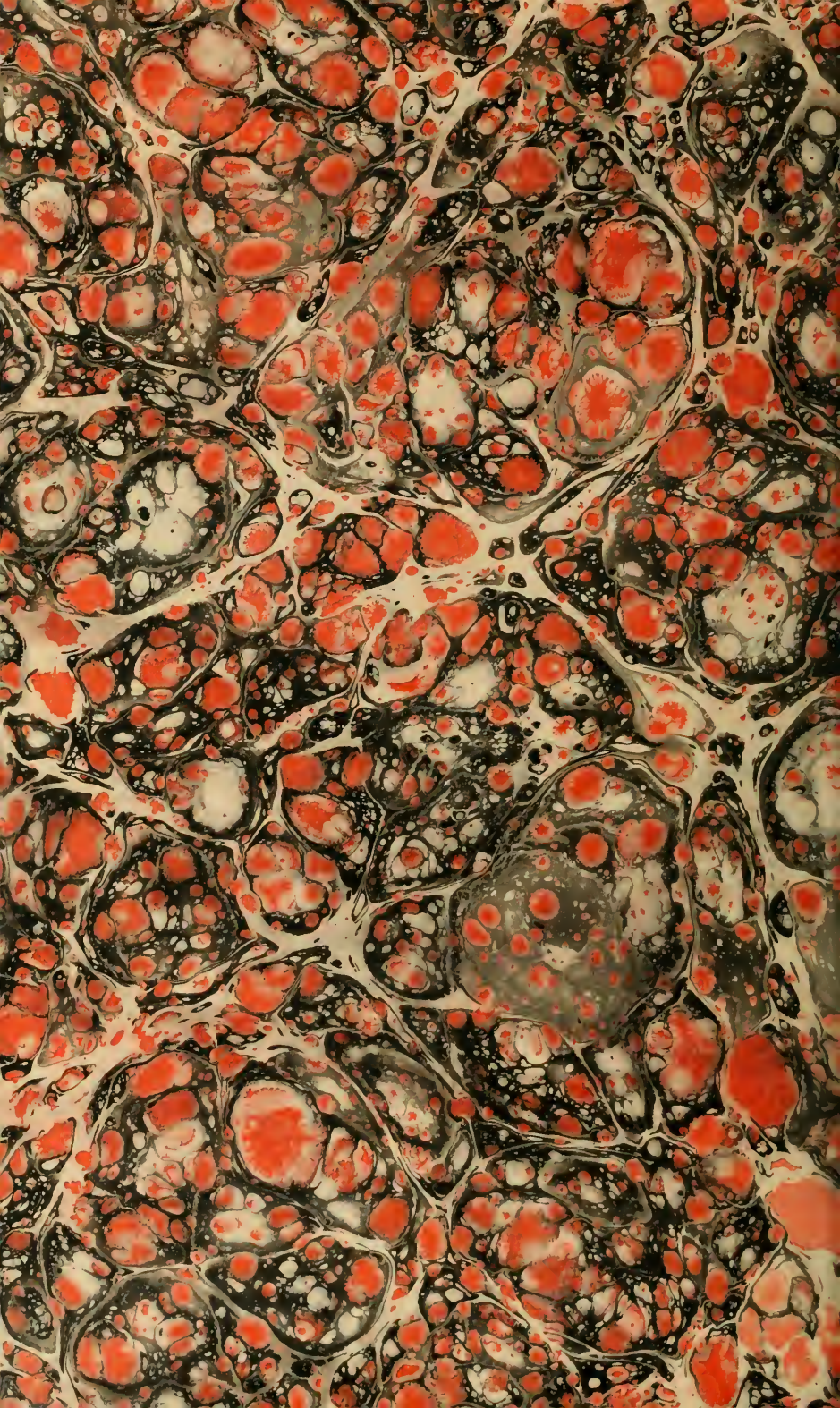
had no alternative. Life, though chequered with ſo many evils, is ſweet; and the anxious concerns for a family make moſt men pauſe, when they ſtand upon the brink of eternity. Lewis XVI. therefore preferred the poiſoned cup of life to the ſword of the aſſaſſin, or the mockery of a judicial (though not unprecedented) trial. His hard fate (for of moſt of his predeceſſors he deſerved it the leaſt) may prove an awful leſſon to all the Kings of the earth. That they may amply profit by it, both for their own ſake, and the peace and happineſs of their ſubjects, is the cordial wiſh and ardent prayer of,

Dear Sir,

Your ever obliged,

and moſt humble Servant,

June 7th, 1791.

* * * * * *

" form. One ſpecies of defect of will is that ariſing from " *compulſion* and inevitable *neceſſity*.—There a conſtraint " upon the will whereby a man is urged to do that which " his judgment diſapproves; and which, it is to be pre- " ſumed, his will (if left to itſelf) would reject. As pu- " niſhments are therefore only inflicted for the abuſe of " that free-will which God has given to men, it is highly " juſt and equitable that a man ſhould be excuſed for " thoſe acts which are done through unavoidable force " and compulſion."